



# St Thomas Aquinas School Norlane

## 2021 Annual Report to the School Community



Registered School Number: 1525

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## Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Rodney Sims, attest that St Thomas Aquinas School is compliant with:

- All of the requirements for the minimum standards and other requirements for the registration of schools as specified in *the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)* and the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)*, except where the school has been granted an exemption from any of these requirements by the VRQA
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2021 school year under the *Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)*
- The Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No.870 - Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in Schools.

28/03/2022

**NOTE:** The School's financial performance information has been provided to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and will be available for the community to access from their website at [www.acnc.gov.au](http://www.acnc.gov.au)

## Governing Authority Report

2021 has been a momentous year for Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Melbourne, with Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS) assuming governance and operations of 290 schools which previously operated under unincorporated structures.

MACS was established to ensure these schools continue the mission of Catholic education to proclaim the Good News while equipping our young people with the education, knowledge, skills and hope to live meaningful lives and enrich the world around them.

Our schools were again asked this year to respond to the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic. Although asked to implement many measures to keep our staff and students safe, our schools were able to continue delivering a high-quality Catholic education through the resilience and dedication of our principals, school leaders and teachers.

Alongside this important work, we were also able to deliver a new policy suite for schools to ensure our students are safe and which enhance the consistency and transparency of school decision-making, while preserving school autonomy and respecting the local context of our schools.

School Advisory Councils have been established to actively support the principal and embed the life of the local Church in the life of each school. It has been wonderful to see so many parents and members of the wider parish community engaged in these critical forums.

Thank you for the support you have given our schools in 2021. We look forward to continuing to work with you as we strive to provide the young people of the Archdiocese of Melbourne with the best kind of education possible, one that fosters a formation of the whole person that is deeply and enduringly humanising.

Yours sincerely

Jim Miles

Executive Director

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd

## Our School Vision

At St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School, we aim to empower children in their learning for life and to develop skills necessary to face challenges with hope, faith and resilience.

We journey together as a faith community valuing our Catholic identity.

Children are the heart of our community, and we support parents to become actively involved in their children's learning.

We value opportunities for learning and reflection that challenge us to aspire to individual excellence.

## School Overview

St Thomas Aquinas Primary School is the Catholic primary school in the parish of Norlane. Norlane is a northern suburb of Geelong that faces many challenges. Unemployment and under-employment, social and addiction issues make life difficult for many in the area. The St Thomas Aquinas community is not immune to these issues.

Many families at St Thomas Aquinas face significant challenges. With this in mind, the school community works tirelessly to be as inclusive as it can be and to provide connections between families and services within the community. St Thomas Aquinas School prides itself on its outreach work with the families of the school. With welfare being an important part of children's social and emotional well-being, the school, through its arrangements with various agencies, provides a range of services to support families in need.

St Thomas Aquinas strives to provide a safe and secure environment for our children and families. We offer a comprehensive Catholic education through offering rich experiences and opportunities that may not otherwise be accessible to our families.

We are now seeing an increasing evangelisation within our school community. St Thomas Aquinas has a diverse student population and celebrates the things that make us similar and the things that make us different. The school values the cultures and the experiences of its community and seeks to build strong relationships with all in its community.

The school has recently upgraded facilities that enable contemporary learning and teaching to take place. The school community takes pride in the school's physical environment and utilises all areas to support learning for its children. The school is committed to providing the children of Norlane with the support they need and opportunities in learning, well-being and faith development to ensure that they are successful participants in society. The school is committed to working in partnership with families and the wider community to provide outstanding learning opportunities for its students.

## Principal's Report

Dear Parents and Friends of St Thomas Aquinas Primary School, Norlane,

I am pleased to present the 2021 Annual Report to the School Community. St Thomas Aquinas is a wonderfully dynamic school community which is well-supported by you all.

I acknowledge the Wadawurrung people, the traditional custodians of the land on which St Thomas Aquinas rests and pay my respects to their elders - past, present and emerging.

Last year, I said that 2020 was certainly a year unlike any other we have experienced and that I hoped we never get to experience it again. The COVID-19 pandemic and the periods of remote learning and lockdown certainly challenged us all. The school community responded to that challenge with strength and compassion. Little did we know that 2021 would be a year of even more challenges. We saw our school community rise to the challenge once again and our community succeeded by pulling together.

I acknowledge the professional, dedicated staff members who work tirelessly to provide excellent learning opportunities for your children, both on-site and through periods of remote learning. The professionalism of the teaching staff, supported by caring learning support officers, has created a community where learning is central, and each child is valued.

I am thankful for the support of our parent community. The partnership the school has with its families is without peer. The trust parents place in the school and the way parents take pride in their children's school is exemplary. Your commitment to your child's education during a difficult year was outstanding.

I wish to thank our Parish Priest, Fr Ray Zammit MSSP, and the wider parish community for their support of Catholic education within Norlane. We have worked to build authentic connections between the school and parish communities and I see this as an important development within our community.

I am grateful for the support of Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd, both through the Western Region Office and the Central Office, and the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria in supporting St Thomas Aquinas in our unique mission within the Church. I value the professionalism and support of staff, particularly those in the Western Region Office.

Finally, I want to thank the wonderful children we have the pleasure to work with. It isn't always easy, but you are the reason we are all here. I thank you for your learning, your care for each other and your respect for our staff.

This annual report reports on the five dimensions of Catholic education. The rest of this report covers these areas. I ask you to read through and come forward if you have any questions.



Rodney Sims

Principal

## Education in Faith

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goals & Intended Outcomes:

At St Thomas Aquinas we believe in a culture of high expectations which embodies the school values of Respect, Compassion, Justice and Service which makes our Catholic Identity visible in our thinking, words and actions.

#### Intended Outcomes:

That student interactions will demonstrate deeper commitment to Gospel values, social justice and the Christian call to service.

### Achievements

The true essence of Education in Faith is community, the complexities of 2021 made the opportunity to share our faith in community difficult for another year.

With our teaching community still able to engage our families with rich learning opportunities in a virtual space in between short stints of on-site learning, our Religious Education Learning and Teaching program was still able to be delivered in a meaningful way.

With St Thomas Aquinas classrooms structured in a multi-age setting, it was important to ensure the Religious Education Curriculum was taught as we rotate through an 'A and B cycle' to make certain the entire Religious Education framework is covered.

One of our achievements in 2021 was the successful delivery of the 'B Cycle' of our Religious Education framework.

Another area of success was our ability to still carry out our Sacramental program in 2021, though density restrictions made it difficult for families to attend. Though, with our ability to come together at short notice and still deliver a Sacramental Program that saw Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation celebrated in 2021 was a significant milestone.

Using data to track success, the MACSSIS survey data proved that there was a continued increase in our goal of building and sustaining our Catholic Identity.

In asking the question, 'To what extent is the Catholic Mission emphasized at your child's school?', our community responded with a growth from 54% to 75% in an annual cycle. This is a true celebration in the building of our Catholic Identity.

#### VALUE ADDED

- Religious Education units of work, planned in teams with the assistance and input of the Religious Education Leader.
- A development of a 'Roadmap' to form teachers understanding of Catholic Social teachings before development of a RE learning and teaching program
- Professional Learning Development still added through Facilitated Planning opportunities



- The learning program for those students in their Sacramental Journey still implemented
- The Sacramental Program still carried out with candidates still able to celebrate their Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation in meaningful ways
- Considerable growth points through the MACSSIS survey around our Religious Education sphere.

## Learning & Teaching

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goal

- To develop a shared vision for learning and teaching in our school
- To be a place of safety that promotes conditions for well-being, learning and connection

#### Intended Outcomes

- High expectations of each member of the community through trust, respect and collaboration
- A consistent approach with student support across learning, well-being, behaviour
- Empowering teachers to support students with learning, well-being, behaviour

### Achievements

Supporting teachers and learning support officers in their work is crucial for improving learning outcomes for all students. St Thomas Aquinas has a team of experienced staff who work across all areas of the school. This includes:

- F-2 Learning Leader
- 3-6 Learning Leader
- Learning Diversity Leader
- Speech Pathologist
- Religious Education Leader
- Student Wellbeing Leader
- Family School Community Partnership Leader

In 2021, this support was important as students entered their second year of disrupted learning because of COVID-19. Ongoing explicit and facilitated planning has lifted the quality of teaching and learning within the school. Teachers plan for a day per week, led by leaders of learning and teaching. These facilitated planning sessions were vital during the periods of COVID-19 lock down and remote learning. Learning and teaching leaders, teachers and learning support officers continued to provide lessons and intervention support via Zoom.

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

St Thomas Aquinas School has an extensive schedule of assessing student learning. With a focus on assessment for learning, the staff are able to quickly and flexibly plan for student learning. During the periods of remote learning, we continued our learning programs for all students and continued our intervention program.

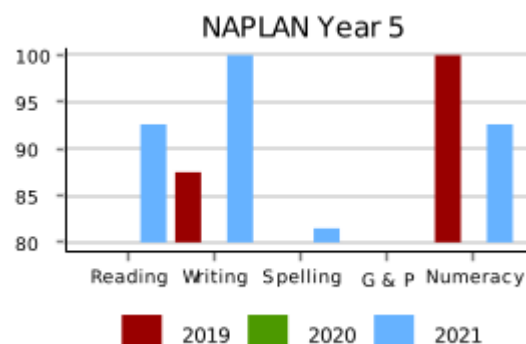
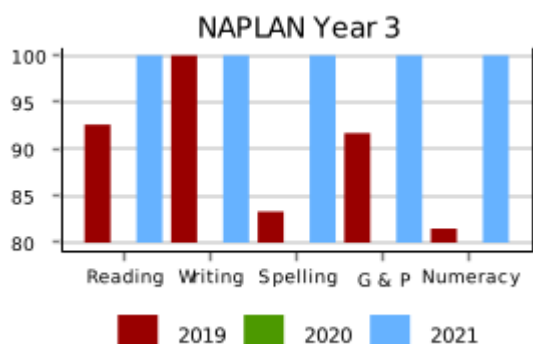
Teachers reported that all children continued to make improvements in their learning over the period of the year. They recognised that remote learning had a negative impact upon some of our most vulnerable children.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2019 %	2020 *	2019 – 2020 Changes *	2021 %	2020 – 2021 Changes *
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	91.7	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Numeracy	81.5	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Reading	92.6	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Spelling	83.3	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Writing	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	80.0	-	-	74.1	-
YR 05 Numeracy	100.0	-	-	92.6	-
YR 05 Reading	75.0	-	-	92.6	-
YR 05 Spelling	80.0	-	-	81.5	-
YR 05 Writing	87.5	-	-	100.0	-

\* There are no NAPLAN results to report in 2020 as the Australian Government decided that due to the COVID-19 pandemic NAPLAN Assessments would not take place.

\*\* Data cannot be reported for this year as the number of students that sat the test was below 5 and the data has been suppressed for privacy reasons in accordance with the ACARA NAPLAN data reporting provisions.

\*\*\* No students sat the NAPLAN tests in this year level and in one or both of the relevant years.



## Student Wellbeing

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

At St Thomas Aquinas we believe we are a place of safety that promotes conditions for well-being, learning and connection. We hold high expectations of each member of the community through trust, respect and collaboration. We strive for a consistent approach with student support that empowers teachers to support students holistically. Our whole community is supportive of and enacts the school's commitment to child safety and success.

In well-being this is lived out when:

- A consistent approach to student behaviour is visible across the school community.
- Teachers, students and families feel safe and supported in the school environment.

### Achievements

Our School is committed to the education of the whole child. We are active in initiating whole school, class, and individual programs, activities and processes to promote wellbeing. Positive relationships are promoted, nurtured and supported by class teachers, support personnel and school leadership. We believe that the best relationships are respectful ones.

During the 2021 school year the wellbeing of all our students and their families was paramount. The continued challenging COVID lock downs and associated home learning periods provided opportunities for all to reflect on and develop knowledge based on the importance of wellbeing. The learning and teaching was centred around the social and emotional needs of all students and their families. Families at risk were provided additional support through regular home visits and telephone calls. On-site supervision was provided for students of essential workers and 'at-risk' students.

Throughout the 2021 school year we endeavoured to build and develop a strong sense of understanding and empathy in this second 'COVID' affected 'different' learning environment for all.

Our school is also a lead school in helping educate students on the importance of Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships. We recognise that all students have individual strengths and challenges.

Additional support is provided for students whose day to day learning is influenced by the existence of one or more challenges. In implementing Social and Emotional our school strives to build a respectful culture and develop practices enhancing the knowledge of healthy relationships, respect and equality for all individuals of the community.

Social and Emotional learning and teaching highlights the importance of individuals having awareness of their own emotions and the impact these emotions can have on themselves and others. Behaviours of individuals can affect the emotions of self and others.

## VALUE ADDED

During 2021 Social Emotional Learning was a major focus due to the unpredictability associated with the COVID pandemic. Through Social and Emotional Learning students recognise the importance of individuals having awareness of their own emotions and the impact these emotions can have on themselves and others. They understand that behaviours can affect the emotions of self and others.

During 2021 our school was fortunate to have a provisional psychologist on his final year placement; this provided another avenue for students to be supported with some of their emotions and behaviours.

We continued to build a strong sense of understanding and empathy by encouraging our students to make responsible choices about personal and social behaviour.

Our school is also a lead school in helping educate students on the importance of Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships.

Many of the planned incursions and excursions which were centred around student wellbeing were for the second year unable to occur or were offered in a modified form due to the COVID lock-downs through the year.

## STUDENT SATISFACTION

Students reported that they liked some elements of remote learning during the COVID-19 lock down but really missed the in person contact with their peers and educators. They enjoyed being able to have more voice in their learning and being able to complete learning at their own pace. They reported that there were many technical issues with remote learning. With this feedback, the second period of remote learning had less class lessons over Zoom. Teachers and learning support officers were proactive in contacting children who may have missed lessons. Families appreciated the support in this area.

From the 2021 MACSSIS Data survey, students reported increasing results in the following areas:

1. Rigorous expectations: How much students feel that their teachers hold them to high expectations of their effort, understanding, persistence and performance - this increased from 73% in 2019 to 83% in 2021
2. Teacher-student relationships: The strength of the social connection between teachers and students, within and beyond the school - this increased from 76% in 2019 to 82% in 2021
3. Student safety: Perceptions of student physical and psychological safety while at school - this increased from 46% in 2019 to 53% in 2021.

As we were unable to celebrate many of our liturgical celebrations in 2021, the children reported a decrease in the Catholic identity of the school from 53% in 2019 to 37% in 2021

**STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

Student attendance was recorded daily during 2021; including the COVID lockdown periods. It was recorded on individual student files on nforma and also on student wellbeing documented notes. Daily absenteeism was followed up by home group teachers. When necessary (e.g. if a student had not presented for 3 days this was followed up by a member of the leadership team). This was managed in an empathetic manner with consideration for the individual circumstances of the family.

At times throughout 2021 home visits from Principal, Deputy Principal or Family School Partnerships Liaison Convenor were necessitated to ensure the safety of the student and/or wellbeing of the family.

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL	
Y01	85.5%
Y02	81.3%
Y03	86.0%
Y04	82.3%
Y05	83.6%
Y06	84.1%
Overall average attendance	83.8%

## Child Safe Standards

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

St Thomas Aquinas takes Child Safety seriously and recognises that some people in our community have challenges managing their behaviour. This foundation has carried through into 2021.

### Achievements

As a school, we have close working relationships with agencies that support children and families in our community such as DFFH, Child Protection, The Orange Door and Barwon Child Youth and Family. All staff members are required to undertake training in mandatory reporting and are encouraged to make formal reports and inquiries. Staff are supported throughout the reporting process. Extensive notes are taken and filed with the student's information.

During remote learning in 2021, teachers and learning support officers conducted lessons via Zoom. Staff undertook professional learning sessions about child safety and online learning. All sessions either had two or more staff members online in the same virtual classroom or online lessons were recorded. Parents were encouraged to be present during all online lessons.

The school has developed a Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct for Staff, Volunteers and Contractors. This is revisited regularly with these groups to ensure compliance and safety of children.

The school has a Code of Conduct for Students that emphasises the need for safety. Parents and carers are also subject to a Code of Conduct that regulates unacceptable behaviour from adults in our community.

Human resource practices ensure that employment processes are consistent with the Child Safe Standards and recommendations of MACS. References of prospective employees are checked and any areas of concern are flagged. Given the challenges many of our children face, the employment of the right staff is essential.

Our response to the Child Safe Standards are in line with our obligation under the law, our commitment to our communities and are designed to minimise the risk of harm to our children.

The school recognises its ongoing commitment to promoting the safety and well-being of children in the immediate school community and in the greater community.

School staff are familiar with the issue of Reportable Conduct and take proactive steps to ensure they are always in safe situations.



## Leadership & Management

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goal:

To develop a shared vision for learning and teaching in our school

#### Intended Outcomes:

- Rigour and standards for high expectations around growth for all students
- Structures and processes that ensure clarity and consistency and create and enhance conditions for learning
- Professional learning pathways for all staff that are aligned to the school's vision and school improvement plan
- A culture that welcomes coaching and mentoring for all

### Achievements

Because of our belief in personalising the learning of all students, we allocated five hours each week to planning in teams. This planning is facilitated by the F- 2 Learning & Teaching Leader and the 3-6 Learning & Teaching Leader and focuses on the use of data collected in the areas of Literacy, Numeracy and Inquiry to plan the future learning of the students. The Learning Diversity team, F-2 L&T and 3-6 L&T leaders, Religious Education Leader, Student Well-being Leader and School Community Partnerships Leader worked cooperatively to lead and manage learning across the school.

Keeping up to date professionally is important for our staff. Therefore, we encourage each member of staff to attend relevant Professional Development activities. Our staff models our belief of being life-long learners through continuously improving our knowledge and skills in education. Teachers have been encouraged to set goals relating to AITSL standards, aimed at refining their practice. These goals are reviewed at annual review meetings and new goals set or existing goals refined.

The school is extremely supportive of staff who are undertaking formal, post-graduate study. In 2021, six teachers were undertaking accreditation studies through ACU. A further two teachers were undertaking the Master of Student Wellbeing course, sponsored by the school and MACS at ACU. A further two teachers were undertaking the Master of Mathematics Education at Monash University, sponsored by the school and MACS. Another teacher was undertaking the Master of Education (Allied School Psychology) at ACU with support from the school and MACS.

Professional learning throughout the year has been focused on building staff capacity in teaching and in developing knowledge and skills in data analysis. Teaching staff meet each week in powerful facilitated planning, following Sharratt and Fullan's Putting Faces on the Data model. Other professional learning during the year included Berry Street Trauma Informed Positive Education, Respectful Relationships.

### EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2021

- Facilitated planning
- Professional Learning Communities
- Agile Leadership - WRO Leading Improvement for Learning
- Respectful Relationships
- Empowering Students within Respectful Relationships for Teachers
- PROTECT, Mandatory Reporting, Child Safe and Reportable Conduct
- Geelong Zone Principal Network
- Geelong Zone Deputy Principals Network
- Supporting and Engaging Families During COVID19
- First Aid training
- ICON training for Admin and Principal
- Support for Staff studying for accreditation (6 staff members), Master of Student Wellbeing (2 staff members), Master of Mathematics Education (2 Staff members), Master of Education (Allied School Psychology) (1 Staff member) and Learning Support Officer course (3 staff members)

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2021	30
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$350

**TEACHER SATISFACTION**

After the disrupted year of 2020, staff found 2021 a particularly challenging experience.

They were proud of the work that they achieved, particularly during the periods of remote learning.

Reflecting on the year, staff noted:

- Miss working face to face with the children, sometimes it's difficult to explain a topic or provide information to some students that have additional learning needs over a screen.
- Challenging to stay motivated for both students and teachers.
- (It was great) Seeing students and families grow together. Seeing a different side to the student.
- Without constant feedback and interaction from staff or parents, some students have lacked motivation and will power to continue with or take responsibility for their own learning.

- Conversations with parents and children to just 'check in' and build community. Parents appreciated this focus and began to open up and communicate more.
- Staff realised that some students and families really struggle with change. This highlights the critical aspect of school as a safe place, of community and of unconditional positive regard.
- Reframed the public's perceptions about teachers in a positive way. This could never have been achieved via other means.
- The experience of lock down, remote learning and working from home certainly had an impact upon staff. They appreciated the opportunity to be back at school and working side by side with colleagues and students.

MACSSIS Survey data shows that teachers are generally positive about the school and the support they receive to undertake their work. Improvement was noted in the following areas:

1. Feedback
2. School Leadership
3. Psychological safety
4. Support to teachers
5. Collective efficacy

We also noted that we needed to continue to work on:

1. Professional learning
2. Collaboration in teams.

This may be a result of numerous lockdowns and the inability to gather together in person to deliver professional learning opportunities.

<b>TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE</b>	
Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	84.9%

<b>ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE</b>	
Staff Retention Rate	83.7%

<b>TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS</b>	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	17.6%
Graduate	23.5%
Graduate Certificate	5.9%
Bachelor Degree	64.7%
Advanced Diploma	11.8%
No Qualifications Listed	11.8%

<b>STAFF COMPOSITION</b>	
Principal Class (Headcount)	3.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	27.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	20.6
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	22.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	21.7
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	1.0

## School Community

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

To engage parents as active partners in their child's learning

### Achievements

Achievements:

- Families feeling safe and connected to the school
- Continuity of Learning
- Use of multiple measures of data to inform change
- Leveraging community partnerships/relationships to access student opportunities
- Getting Ready for School Program

In 2021 our families endured the second year of interrupted schooling accompanied by the associated challenges of home learning, technology, unsuitable learning spaces, isolation from support networks and some parents/carers attempting to work from home. Student online attendance and wellbeing continued to be a leading school priority to keep our students and families feeling safe, supported and connected to the school. Using parent perception data collated from 2020 surveys, community conversations, phone calls, student attendance, and wellbeing data alongside our knowledge of the community demographic, we gained an understanding of what families needed/valued and adapted our school processes and remote learning delivery mode. This included more asynchronous learning opportunities alongside our synchronous program.

Multiple platforms for communication continued to be used to ensure all families were reached and received accurate information to minimise anxiety and stress. Family-school support systems remained active for our most vulnerable families.

The significant gap in access to the internet and digital devices continued to be a barrier for families. To ensure equity and access to learning for our students, technology, WIFI, and technology support were provided to every student/family in need. Despite efforts from all stakeholders, many parents/carers found the technology stressfully challenging and beyond their knowledge and skills, counterproductive in their efforts to support their children's learning. Responding to individual family pressures, these students attended on-site for supervision to ensure continuity of learning.

After many months of cancellations and postponements of bookings, leveraging our community partnerships and relationships our students were provided with engaging in-person educational experiences. This included a two-night grade 5/6 camp to Cottage by The Sea, participation in 'Stories in the Wall' a digital storytelling project in partnership with Arts Centre Melbourne, the Inspiring Student Leaders program in partnership with Geelong Arts Centre, Hockey clinics with Geelong Hockey Association, Learning through Lunch in partnership with Ardoch Youth

Foundation, participation in Norlane Summer Solstice Festival in partnership with the Norlane Community centre amongst others. A well-attended 'Getting Ready for School Program' was facilitated and relationships were maintained with our PlayLinks Playgroup families through home deliveries with art packs and the use of social media and Flipgrid for singing lessons.

## PARENT SATISFACTION

There is no doubt that the 'home-school' experience drew students, families, and teachers into a stronger collaborative partnership around learning. Qualitative evidence collected through Zoom Community conversations, wellbeing/learning data, family communication logs, and real-time family engagement in zoom classes, particularly in the junior grades, provided us with a picture to capture new beliefs and good practice. At the very least, there was an evident appreciation for 'the other' in our family-school partnership goal.

Data from the 2021 MACSSIS Survey shows that we are continuing to improve in the following areas:

School Climate

Student Safety

Communication

Catholic Identity

We still need to continue work on:

Family engagement

Barriers to engagement

This may be a result of the difficulties of the school year with the numerous remote learning episodes.

## Future Directions

At St Thomas Aquinas, we believe in a culture of rigour and standards with high expectations around growth for all students. Teachers offer a differentiated program that is reflective of individual student needs. At St Thomas Aquinas, we encourage teachers and students to be reflective in their learning, thinking and actions.

Over the next period of time, we want to develop collective teacher efficacy to ensure consistency in all areas of the school. We will refine structures and processes to enhance a high-performance culture that is built on respect, trust and collaboration.

We will develop a shared vision for teaching and learning in our school through having:

- Structures and processes that ensure clarity and consistency and create and enhance conditions for learning
- Rigour and standards for high expectations around growth for all students
- Professional learning pathways for all staff that are aligned to the school's vision and school improvement plan

We will develop a culture in which the school values of respect, compassion, justice and service are lived out in our daily life through having:

- A culture of high expectations, respect, trust and collaboration
- A school that is a place of safety for all
- Our Catholic identity visible in our thinking, words and actions

We will be a place of safety that promotes conditions for well-being, learning and connection through having:

- High expectations of each member of the community
- A consistent approach to student support across learning, well-being and behaviour
- A culture which empowers teachers and support staff to support students with learning, well-being and behaviour